

Please support Senate Joint Resolution No. 4, "Memorializing the US Congress to permanently preserve Plum Island as a National Wildlife Refuge." Absolutely no good can come of offering the island for private sale. There can no positive economic, ecological, cultural or historic outcome for anyone on the planet. The only people who would like to see Plum Island developed are a few greedy individuals who have no concern for one of the last protected ecosystems on the east coast. I was a Peace Corps volunteer in Paraguay. It was my first, but not my last, experience working with local and national leaders who had lived in a morass of economic despair and hopelessness for years. They and the communities they served had no concept of preserving anything (their own wealth, the environment, cultural treasures) for future generations; all actions were undertaken thinking that tomorrow, all of it could just disappear. I understood that mentality, but I was glad I lived in a country where we still think about things in terms of how our kids and our grandkids are going to survive, and their quality of life in that not too distant future.

The suggestion by legislators, undoubtedly encouraged by people whose only concern is in making a buck for themselves, to destroy Plum Island, makes me realize that we are going backwards as a nation. We really are in such dire economic and moral straits that we are all in some sort of bizarre survival mode, and to hell with anything—be it a wildlife habitat or clean water or a calm and tranquil stretch of beach—that gets in our way.

You've heard all the testimony regarding the conservation value of Plum Island. You've probably heard this type of letter also. I know that Plum Island got to its status as fragile ecosystem in the most unlikely of ways. As the daughter of a commercial fisherman I've grown up with it, and its history, in the backyard. And as I feel about many undeveloped places, I would be happy to let it alone, to pay taxes so that I could never visit it, just like the vast spaces in the west that are preserved for wild things. We don't have too many wild things left here. There is no reason that Plum Island needs to be sold to any organization other than one that will protect and preserve it. My taxes (30% of what I earn) can pay for the new facility in Kansas. Hey, they pay \$4billion a year in assistance to Afghanistan, where I served for a year, so they can surely cover the cost of a new research facility. You do not need the money! You need to protect this island! It is a treasure and you can stop its destruction! There is no earthly reason why it cannot be saved. Be heroes. Thank you for your time.

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